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ABSTRACT

Nonpromotion of elementary school students is a highly controversial and emotional issue, and a vast amount of literature has been devoted to the topic. With the current emphasis on raising academic standards in public schools, more and more educators are viewing "social promotion" with disfavor. This study was conducted to determine current attitudes toward grade repetition. Data were gathered through an attitude questionnaire completed by 11 male and 20 female education graduate students, most of whom were teachers, at the University of Alaska at Anchorage. In general, subjects felt that both social maturity and academic achievement should be considered in promotion decisions, that grade repetition can be ultimately beneficial to students, and that promotion should not be automatic. Subjects also were given case descriptions of six elementary students and were asked to indicate whether they should be promoted or retained. When all six student cases were combined, 61 percent of the male subjects, as opposed to 44 percent of the female subjects, recommended promotion. A comparison between subjects with primary and intermediate grade emphasis showed that 55 percent of those with primary emphasis favored retention, as compared with 48 percent of those with intermediate emphasis. Respondents' comments indicated that parents should be involved in the promotion decision-making process. (CB)

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ATTITUDES TOWARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT RETENTION

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Introduction

The elementary school plays an important role in the development of children, second only to the home. George Strayer profiles the ideal school in Education in the Elementary School by Caswell and Foshay as a school "in which children learn the tool of inquiry, respect for differences and open-minded avoidance of prejudice, the difficult relationship between freedom and responsibility, and the art of cooperating . . . " (1957, p. vi). The type of school and the school's organization as well as the relationships a student develops with his teachers and with his peers influences a child's self-concept (Metcalfe, 1981).

Achievement scores began to drop in the 1970's, the "back to the basics" movement gained prominence, and politically, education gained status and became an issue. Where, then, does grade repetition, an educational issue since the 1800's when graded schools began to gain popularity, fit in the collage of American education?

Whether to promote or retain a student is the question faced annually by educators and parents of one million American students. The magnitude of each decision involving a student's possible retention demands that these decisions be made with great consideration. Conflicting views among educators as to whether grade repetition is justified make grade repetition decisions even more difficult. The purpose of this paper was to determine the attitudes of graduate students taking education classes on the University of Alaska, Anchorage campus during the summer of 1984 toward grade repetition.

Definitions

Grade retention, grade repetition: requirement that an elementary student repeat a grade level through a second school year; failure to be promoted to the next grade level. Also referred to as held back, repeating, non-promotion, or failure.

Retention: Non-promotion of a student to the next grade level at the conclusion of a school year.

Assumptions and Limitations

The assumptions and limitations of this study were:

1. The population sampled was representative of graduate students taking education classes on the University of Alaska, Anchorage campus during the summer of 1984.
2. The study was limited to graduate students with an elementary emphasis and to students who responded to the questionnaire.

Review of Related Literature

The educational value of a student's repetition of one year at a specific grade level continues to be the subject of a sometimes emotional debate. As Rose, Medway, Cantrell, and Marus (1983) pointed out, American schools followed their British forerunners' retention practices when American schools became graded in the 1800's. They found that "retention was so common during this period that it has been estimated that approximately every other child was retained at least once during their first eight years of school." (p. 201)

In the 1930's social scientists began challenging retention because they felt a child's social and emotional growth could potentially be damaged by the practice. "Social promotion" was instituted, so students were passed on to the following grade instead of repeating a grade. These students were grouped with other students of similar ability, and remediation was provided where necessary.

For the small number of students who were retained during the next three decades, academic achievement was not the only data considered. "School officials also considered what was 'in the best interests' of the children in view of their social and emotional maturity, chronological age, attendance record, and home background." (Rose, Medway, Cantrell, and Marus, 1983, p. 201-202)

The last 25 years, however, have found the value of "social promotion" being increasingly questioned by educators. Student achievement on standardized tests has declined since the early 1960's. The reinstatement of stricter standards for promotion has been identified by some educators as a means of ensuring academic mastery. The demands of the public for educational accountability have led to the establishment of minimum competency testing in many public schools.

Rose, Medway, Cantrell, and Marus (1983) state that basic skills assessment programs have been designed to insure minimum standards of achievement and to discourage the passing of students from grade to grade through the "social promotion" process. Behavioral learning objectives are assessed through testing and standards for passing are established to insure success with unmastered curriculum. Few states, however, require retention for students who fail to meet the competencies although it is an alternative. "Potential increases in the number of students denied promotion as a result of failing to meet certain

academic standards has served to rekindle arguments for and against retention." (Rose, Medway, Cantrell, and Marus, 1983, p. 202)

These authors also studied retention rates. For the 13 states retention rates available for 1978-80, they found that rates varied from less than 4% in Arizona, Hawaii, and New Hampshire to more than 8% in Mississippi with retention of first graders being the most common. Retention rates tend to decline from grades one through six, but they sharply increase at grade seven and peak two to three years later. Apparently, more relaxed standards at the elementary levels are followed by more stringent promotion requirements at the junior and senior high school levels.

In summarizing approximately 25 studies concerning the effects of retention on school achievement, Rose, Medway, Cantrell, and Marus (1983) found that "promoted pupils make gains of 8-12 months in a year while retained pupils make gains of only about 6 months." (p. 206) After examining in excess of 6,000 cases, these researchers found "that only about 20-25% of the retainees learn more material in their second year, while as many as 40% of the retainees actually learn less material." No differences in adjustment between potential retainees and first-grade retainees were found by Chansky (1964), Finlayson (1977), and Goodlad (1954).

Rose, Medway, Cantrell, and Marus (1983) sumarized that grade retention has not been found to provide any significant benefits for students with academic or adjustment problems. They felt retention is suggested and accepted because almost all retained students exhibit some progress during the repeated year.

Finlayson (1975) found parents were more apt to advocate retention for one child if they felt it had been helpful for another of their children.

R. G. Reiter (1973) reviewed the research on promotion and retention and concluded that both social promotion and retention have negative effects. He found that neither greater academic achievement nor better emotional and social adjustment were insured by retention. However, social promotion appeared to be only somewhat more satisfactory.

C. Thomas Holmes (1983) reexamined studies that compared promoted students with retained students in the areas of language arts, reading, and math. Only studies that matched control students with retained students on achievement test scores were reexamined. Holmes found that the retained students scored lower than the control students on all subsequent achievement tests in the three skills areas. Evidence suggested that in math achievement retained students would, in time, be able to approach the scores of the control students. Evidence did not indicate that the gap would close significantly in the areas of reading and language arts. Holmes concluded that if the intent of retention was to improve students' achivement in the basic skills, then the research did not appear to support the practice.

Owen and Ranick (1977), on the other hand, presented only positive results on a school district's policy of retaining students until skills expected to be mastered at a specific grade level were, in fact, mastered. Retained students were assigned to groups with other students of their age. Students achieving most of the skills at a specified grade level were given partial promotions.

Individual needs were diagnosed, and needs were met by schools providing intensive instruction based on identified needs. The results of this policy were declining dropout and retention rates and increasing IQ and achievement scores.

Clair L. Koons (1977) disagreed with Owen and Ranick's "claim that promoting students beyond their mastery of specified skills is more psychologically damaging than 'requiring children to work at material until they have mastered it.'" (p. 701) Koons claimed that Owen and Ranick cited no research to support their point of view and stated that research supporting the opposite point of view was considerable.

Koons indicated that "the fallacy in the Owen-Ranick argument lies in the assumption that low-achieving students who are promoted with their age peers cannot be given work at a level at which they can succeed." (p. 701) Providing for individual differences within the classroom should, according to Koons, provide students who lack certain skills with an opportunity to learn.

Koons agreed that a student should be able to continue in the education process or take a job upon completion of high school. But, she also asserted that "schools should be made to fit students, not students made to fit the schools." (p. 701)

Koons suggested that, while Owen and Ranick's Greensville program reported impressive results, there were four reasons for these results to be quite different than results reported from other retention studies. First, Koons suggested, the Hawthorne Effect may have been responsible, in part, for the higher scores. Second, the strict promotion policy may have spurred students to greater achievement. Third, a greater motivation to apply themselves to tests

may have increased students' test scores without a comparable increase in achievement. Finally, teachers may have, consciously or not, taught the test.

According to Koons review of research, studies indicated "regularly promoted low-achieving children score higher on achievement tests than do similar retained students after they spend an additional year in a grade." (p. 702) Koons also cited Wallihan's research of retainees. Wallihan "found that students matched on IQ scores in the first grade differed on the basis of promotion when they reached the sixth grade." (p. 702) Koons concluded by stating that no criterion exist to predict which students will benefit from retention and that, in some cases, students may actually regress if retained.

Research by Sandoval and Hughes (1981) identified the characteristics of students for whom retention would be beneficial. Classroom observations and interviews by the researchers with parents and teachers were completed as well as individually testing each student with a battery of tests designed to measure interpersonal relationships, perceptual motor ability, academic achievement, physical and cognitive development, and intellectual functioning.

A student's initial status in social skills, emotional development, and particularly in reading proved to be the best indicators of a student's success in a repeated year. Relatively unimportant indicators for success in a repeated year were physical size, family background, visual-motor development, and early life experiences. Successful students achieved realistic gains and completed the repeated year in the top one-third of their class. Students who were not successful had test results that showed extreme scores on tests of adjustment and achievement. The researchers felt that special education was perhaps a more

appropriate placement for these students than repetition of the same grade level for a second year.

McAfee's (1981) study involved three groups of students: retained students, regularly promoted students, and students receiving compensatory education who were promoted. This study indicated that while retention appeared to have no effect on learning at the junior high level, retention did appear to have a beneficial effect on learning for students at the elementary level.

Pinellas County, Florida, instituted a stringent promotion/retention policy in the fall of 1977. The policy was intended to meet four objectives. First, students would be retained who would be best served by retention. Second, promotion and retention criteria would be established. Third, stiffer criteria for promotion would better prepare students for the state's minimum competencies tests. Finally, students, parents, and community members would have the assurance that a high school diploma had meaning.

Elligett and Tocco (1983) found that Pinellas County students who were retained did make substantial gains in scores during the repeated year. The researchers also found that students retained in the earlier grades consistently made greater gains than did those retained in the later grades." (p. 734) Elligett and Tocco also found that when retained students were promoted, their achievement the following year showed improvement over their achievement before retention. There was a decrease in grade equivalent deficits, also. These improvements occurred even though the curricula and tests were more difficult.

Godfrey (1972) reviewed a study by the North Carolina Advancement School and reported findings that were quite different than those of the Pinellas County

study. In that study sixth and seventh graders who had been regularly promoted were reading at a grade level of 6.8. Students who had been retained once were reading at the 5.2 level, and students who had been retained two or more times were reading at a grade level of 4.5. Math achievement for the three groups followed a similar pattern with percentiles for the groups being 27th, 10th, and 5th, respectively. Retention apparently did not help students "catch up" academically.

The North Carolina study also found that retainees' scores on self-concept tests were lower than those who had not been retained. Tests also indicated that retainees tended to have doubts about their own self-worth and their ability to achieve the goals that were possible for most people. Finally, retainees tended to blame failure on forces that were beyond their control.

Caplan (1973) studied another aspect of the retention-promotion controversy - the role classroom conduct plays in the retention or promotion of elementary students. When students' behavior was analyzed, it was found that "the low-achieving girls who were promoted were significantly better behaved. . . than the low-achieving girls whom teachers required to repeat a grade." (p. 9) No behavioral difference was noted among boys. Girl retainees' mean behavior ratings were even lower than the mean behavior ratings for boys.

According to the study, it appeared that girls were promoted or retained in part on the basis of their behavior. Girls risked having their abilities underestimated by aggressive or disruptive classroom behavior. However, girls risked having their academic difficulties underestimated or overlooked if their behavior conformed to school norms.

Stroup and Zirkel (1983) reviewed the legal aspects of the retention/promotion controversy and developed four inferences based on court cases concerning the issue. First, promotion/retention decisions based on multiple criteria have been, and will probably continue to be, deferred to school officials. Closer scrutiny will probably be given cases involving single-criteria decisions. Second, adequate prior notice may be required if sweeping changes in promotion requirements occur. Third, because the courts will assume informal retention challenging procedures are in place, additional procedures will probably not be required. Finally, close scrutiny will be afforded systems in which minority groups are disportionately impacted. In such cases, the school will be required to provide the burden of proof justifying promotion/retention decisions.

Education has seen the pendulum swing to extremes on a number of issues. The promotion/retention controversy is an issue that has received considerable attention. The pendulum has swung from a time in the 1800's when an estimated one half of all students were retained to the extreme in the 1900's when social promotion greatly decreased the number of students retained. The last 25 years, however, has found educators increasingly questioning the value of social promotion, and the debate continues.

No one point of view seems to dominate the vast amount of literature concerning the subject. A number of factors appear to be important when attempting to determine the benefits and disadvantages which may result from the decision to retain an individual student.

The literature appears to indicate that a decision to retain or promote a student is a very personal decision that requires looking at the individual child, assessing his/her needs, and finally making a decision that will contribute to the child's academic success that is based on as much information as can reasonably be accumulated. In addition to academic achievement, factors such as maturity, social and emotional development, IQ, classroom conduct, verbal development, physiological factors, self-concept, attitudes toward school and grade retention, and home environment should be considered when making a promotion/retention decision.

Neither proponents nor opponents of grade retention appear to advocate a single solution to the problem of academic underachievement. A variety of special programs have been designed to provide teachers with opportunities to meet the variety of learning needs of underachievers. Still, the problem remains of how to best meet the needs of the child who, for whatever reason, does not master basic learning objectives.

There are studies that indicate that grade retention will negatively affect retained students. These are countered with other studies that refute those findings. While some students are being promoted to continued failure, other students are probably being retained without the benefits and disadvantages of that decision being adequately assessed.

Much more research needs to be done focusing on how children learn and how to effectively teach a variety of learners. Optimal learning achievement for

every student is an important educational goal, and a greater understanding of the impact of promotion and retention on low-achieving students appears to be just as important.

Method

Educators have debated and continue to debate the beneficial and detrimental attributes of grade repetition. The purpose of this descriptive study was to determine the attitudes of graduate students taking education classes on the University of Alaska, Anchorage campus during the summer of 1984 toward grade repetition.

Subjects:

The subjects for this study were graduate students enrolled in four graduate level education classes at the University of Alaska, Anchorage during the first session of summer classes. The subjects were in the following classes: ED 627, Education Research; ED 638, Supervision for Improvement of Instruction; ED 631. Advanced Educational Psychology, and ED 626, Introduction to Computer Assisted Instruction. Most of the subjects were teachers during the regular school year. Only elementary emphasis subjects were asked to participate in data-gathering process.

Instrument:

The instrument used was a four-page questionnaire with a cover-letter designed by the researcher. A copy of the instrument is included in the appendix.

The first three questions asked were demographic in nature: 1) number of years of teaching experience, 2) level of responsibility, and 3) sex.

The next 19 items were statements for which the respondent was asked to circle the response that most nearly reflected his/her feeling about the item.

A modified Likert scale was used: SA, strongly agree; A, agree; D, disagree; and SD, strongly disagree. No neutral or undecided response was included. These items dealt primarily with the purpose of retention, criteria for promotion, and some causes and effects of retention.

The third portion of the questionnaire included seven brief student profiles. Instructions indicated to respondents that they were to place themselves in the teacher's role in May when a final decision had to be made concerning the promotion or retention of a student. In every case, parents had been informed of their child's progress. Respondents indicated whether to promote or to retain each fictional student.

The questionnaire concluded with a space for comments. Responses on this portion of the questionnaire were optional and nondirected.

Procedures

To determine the attitudes of University of Alaska, Anchorage graduate students with an elementary emphasis toward grade repetition, a 29-item questionnaire with a cover letter was developed by the researcher. The cover letter and questionnaire were reviewed by three educators prior to distribution. As a result of this review, a comments section was included, a response item was added, one student profile was added, and one student profile was reworded.

Class lists were used to determine the number of potential respondents in six graduate classes. Packets were prepared by class for distribution. Permission to distribute the questionnaires was secured from professors personally in three situations and through a student of the class in a fourth situation. Two classes were eliminated from the sample because the researcher

was not able to contact the professors involved, and time restrictions dictated this decision.

The questionnaires were distributed in four graduate classes. The number of students with an elementary emphasis was unknown in three of the four classes. In those classes, questionnaires were distributed to all students with only elementary emphasis students asked to respond. In the fourth class, only students with an elementary emphasis received questionnaires.

Instructions in the cover letter indicated that the respondent was to remove the cover letter and return the completed questionnaire to the class instructor. The researcher then contacted the professors and the student contact to acquire the completed questionnaires.

Results

Ninety grade repetition questionnaires were distributed in four summer graduate classes at the University of Alaska, Anchorage. Thirty-five questionnaires were returned. However, responses from only 31 questionnaires were tabulated. Of the four questionnaires not included in the tabulations, one was from a secondary respondent, one included no indication of the level of responsibility, and two were received after a majority of the tabulations had already been calculated.

Thirty-nine percent of the questionnaires distributed were returned, but only 34% of the returned questionnaires were included in the tabulations. The percentage of secondary emphasis students who received questionnaires, but who were asked not to respond is unknown.

Numerical values were assigned to the possible responses as follows: Strongly Agree, SA=4; Agree, A=3; Disagree, D=2; and Strongly Disagree, SD=1. For the purpose of this study, it was assumed that a mean score of 2.50 or above indicated an agreement with a questionnaire statement. A mean score below 2.50 indicated a disagreement with a statement.

Means were based upon the number of responses received for each item. There were 29 items to be answered. Means were tabulated for the total group, Table I; males and females, Table II; and primary, intermediate, and other respondents, Table III.

Respondents most strongly agreed with item 11. Seventeen respondents, or 55%, strongly agreed, and fourteen (45%) agreed that "a child's maturation and emotional growth are as important as academic achievement." Female respondents

Table I

Summary of Respondents' Attitudes Toward Grade Repetition

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

Item	SA No.	SA %	A No.	A %	D No.	D %	SD No.	SD %	*AVERAGE
1. The primary purpose of retention is to prepare a student for successful achievement in the following grade.	9	29%	18	58%	4	13%	--	--	3.16
2. It is acceptable to promote a student who has not successfully completed the requirements for a particular grade level.	2	6%	12	39%	9	29%	8	26%	2.26
3. Promotion should be only a matter of attending classes a certain number of days during the school year.	--	--	--	--	6	19%	25	81%	1.19
4. Promotion should be based upon mastery of grade-level requirements.	10	32%	18	58%	3	10%	--	--	3.23
5. Retention will stifle a child's desire to learn.	1	3%	3	10%	22	71%	5	16%	2.00
6. Retention can be ultimately beneficial to students retained in the intermediate grades.	2	7%	20	69%	7	24%	--	--	2.83
7. Retaining a student in the primary grades is less traumatic than retention in the intermediate grades.	10	32%	14	45%	7	23%	--	--	3.10
8. A child's parents should ultimately decide whether to promote or retain the child.	3	10%	11	35%	14	45%	3	10%	2.45

*Averages were computed by assigning numeric values to responses: SA=4, A=3, D=2, SD=1.

Table I - Cont.

Summary of Respondents' Attitudes Toward Grade Repetition

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

Item	SA		A		D		SD		AVERAGE
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
9. A child's lack of achievement may be the result of immaturity because the child's birthdate falls in the last half of the year.	9	29%	19	61%	1	3%	2	7%	3.13
10. Retention can be a positive step in a child's education.	12	39%	18	58%	1	3%	--	--	3.35
11. A child's maturation and emotional growth are as important as academic achievement.	17	55%	14	45%	--	--	--	--	3.55
12. Retaining students will help them catch up academically.	4	13%	22	71%	5	16%	--	--	2.97
13. Retention has a detrimental effect on a student's self-concept.	--	--	12	40%	17	57%	1	3%	2.37
14. Classroom behavior is an important consideration in determining a child's promotion or retention.	2	7%	8	27%	19	63%	1	3%	2.37
15. Retention has a detrimental effect on a child's attitudes.	1	3%	10	33%	17	57%	2	7%	2.33
16. Retention has a detrimental effect on a child's academic growth.	--	--	1	3%	25	81%	5	16%	1.87

Table I - Cont.

Summary of Respondents' Attitudes Toward Grade Repetition

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

Item	SA No.	SA %	A No.	A %	D No.	D %	SD No.	SD %	AVERAGE
17. Retention provides a child with time to grow and mature, increasing success in learning.	9	29%	20	65%	2	6%	--	--	3.29
18. Retention reduces the range of abilities in a classroom placing student's closer to their learning pers.	1	3%	20	65%	9	29%	1	3%	2.68
19. Retention provides motivational incentive for students.	3	10%	8	27%	19	63%	--	--	2.47

	Promote No.	Promote %	Retain No.	Retain %
Cheryl's teacher rarely has to remind her to work independently, to pay attention, or to talk in turn. Although her attendance is good, she is reading approximately two years below her fourth grade level and her math skills are only somewhat higher. She is of average intelligence and size.	13	45%	16	55%
Tim is a mature second grader who is a willing contribution to class discussions and cooperates with others in group situations. Although he has been absent 34 days this year, he has attempted to make up some missed assignments. He has an IQ of 95 and is reading approximately one year below grade level. He enjoys and does quite well in science, but math is difficult for him, and he needs much encouragement to complete assignments. Tim is quite popular with his classmates.	21	72%	8	28%

Table I - Cont.

Summary of Respondents' Attitudes Toward Grade Repetition

	Promote		Retain	
	No.	%	No.	%
Marnie is a visually impaired fifth grader whose attendance is excellent, but she has to spend part of every school day in the resource room working on such skills as learning to type and improving her listening skills. As a result, Marnie has not been able to complete all the required work in her English, math, and social studies classes. The work she has turned in has been of acceptable quality. Marnie is small for her age. Her favorite subject is reading.	26	84%	5	16%
David is a borderline third grader who transferred midyear from a village school. He is quiet and well-behaved. Oral reading is difficult for him, and it appears difficult for him to express himself verbally. He is of average intelligence size.	16	55%	13	45%
Tania is a shy first grade student who exhibits little self-confidence and rarely smiles. She is smaller than many of her classmates. She is an adequate, but slow, reader and usually is one of the last to turn in assignments. Her attendance is good, and Tania never causes a disturbance in the classroom or on the playground.	17	61%	11	39%
Darron is a kindergarten student who still cannot write his name, and he doesn't know his colors. He's always just a little behind most of the other students in his class. His mother thinks Darron is doing fine because, after all, he's only in kindergarten.	2	7%	26	93%
Darla is a sixth grade student who spends, it seems, as much time in the reading and math resource room or in the principal's office as she does in her classroom. Her attendance is fair, but she never turns in any of the work she misses when she is absent. Although Darla's IQ is in the high average range, her reading level is only that of a fourth grader. Math is not much higher, and she is failing in spelling. Her work and study habits are very poor, and homework is rarely completed.	7	24%	22	76%

Table II

Summary of Male and Female Respondents' Attitudes Toward Grade Repetition

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

Item		SA		A		D		SD		*AVERAGE
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
1. The primary purpose of retention is to prepare a student for successful achievement in the following grade.		5	45%	6	55%	--	--	--	--	3.45 Male
		4	20%	12	60%	4	20%	--	--	3.00 Female
2. It is acceptable to promote a student who has not successfully completed the requirements for particular grade level.		2	18%	4	37%	3	27%	2	18%	2.55 Male
		--	--	8	40%	6	30%	6	30%	2.10 Female
3. Promotion should be only a matter of attending classes a certain number of days during the school year.		--	--	--	--	2	18%	9	82%	1.18 Male
		--	--	--	--	4	20%	16	80%	1.20 Female
4. Promotion should be based upon mastery of grade-level requirements.		4	36%	6	55%	1	9%	--	--	3.27 Male
		6	30%	12	60%	2	10%	--	--	3.20 Female
5. Retention will stifle a child's desire to learn.		--	--	2	18%	8	73%	1	9%	2.09 Male
		1	5%	1	5%	14	70%	4	20%	1.95 Female
6. Retention can be ultimately beneficial to students retained in the intermediate grades.		1	10%	8	80%	1	10%	--	--	3.00 Male
		1	5%	12	63%	6	32%	--	--	2.74 Female
7. Retaining a student in the primary grades is less traumatic than retention in the intermediate grades.		3	27%	3	27%	5	46%	--	--	2.82 Male
		7	35%	11	55%	2	10%	--	--	3.25 Female
8. A child's parents should ultimatly decide whether to promote or retain the child.		1	9%	3	27%	7	64%	--	--	2.45 Male
		2	10%	8	40%	7	35%	3	15%	2.45 Female

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* Averages were computed by assigning numeric values to responses; SA=4, A=3, D=2, SD=1.

Table II - Cont.

Summary of Male and Female Respondents' Attitudes Toward Grade Repetition

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

Item	SA No.	SA %	A No.	A %	D No.	D %	SD No.	SD %	AVERAGE
9. A child's lack of achievement may be the result of immaturity because the child's birthdate falls in the last half of the year.	3	27%	6	55%	--	--	2	18%	2.91 Male
	6	30%	13	65%	1	5%	--	--	3.25 Female
10. Retention can be a positive step in a child' education.	3	27%	8	73%	--	--	--	--	3.27 Male
	9	45%	10	50%	1	5%	--	--	3.40 Female
11. A child's maturation and emotional growth are as important as academic achievement.	4	36%	7	64%	--	--	--	--	3.36 Male
	13	65%	7	35%	--	--	--	--	3.65 Female
12. Retaining students will help them catch up academically.	2	18%	8	73%	1	9%	--	--	3.09 Male
	2	10%	14	70%	4	20%	--	--	2.90 Female
13. Retention has a detrimental effect on a student's self-concept.	--	--	5	50%	5	50%	--	--	2.50 Male
	--	--	7	35%	12	60%	1	5%	2.30 Female
14. Classroom behavior is an important consideration in determining a child's promotion or retention.	1	9%	3	27%	7	64%	--	--	2.45 Male
	1	5%	5	27%	12	63%	1	5%	2.32 Female
15. Retention has a detrimental effect on a child's attitudes.	--	--	2	20%	7	70%	1	10%	2.10 Male
	1	5%	8	40%	10	50%	1	5%	2.45 Female
16. Retention has a detrimental effect on a child's academic growth.	--	--	--	--	9	82%	2	18%	1.82 Male
	--	--	1	5%	16	80%	3	15%	1.90 Female
17. Retention provides a child with time to grow and mature, increasing success in learning.	1	9%	9	82%	1	9%	--	--	3.00 Male
	8	40%	11	55%	1	5%	--	--	3.35 Female

Table II - Cont.

Summary of Male and Female Respondents' Attitudes Toward Grade Repetition

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

Item	SA No.	SA %	A No.	A %	D No.	D %	SD No.	SD %	AVERAGE
18. Retention reduces the range of abilities in a classroom placing students closer to their learning peers.	--	--	10	91%	--	--	1	9%	2.82 Male
	1	5%	10	50%	9	45%	--	--	2.60 Female
19. Retention provides motivational incentives for students.	1	10%	4	40%	5	50%	--	--	2.60 Male
	2	10%	4	20%	14	70%	--	--	2.40 Female

	Promote No.	Promote %	Retain No.	Retain %	
Cheryl's teacher rarely has to remind her to work independently, to pay attention, or to talk in turn. Although her attendance is good, she is reading approximately two years below her fourth grade level and her math skills are only somewhat higher. She is of average intelligence and size.	6	55%	5	45%	Male
	7	39%	11	61%	Female
Tim is a mature second grader who is a willing contribution to class discussions and cooperates with others in group situations. Although he has been absent 34 days this year, he has attempted to make up some missed assignments. He has an IQ of 95 and is reading approximately one year below grade level. He enjoys and does quite well in science, but math is difficult for him, and he needs much encouragement to complete assignments. Tim is quite popular with his classmates.	8	80%	2	20%	Male
	13	68%	6	32%	Female
Marnie is a visually impaired fifth grader whose attendance is excellent, but she has to spend part of every school day in the resource room working on such skills as learning to type and improving her listening skills. As a result, Marnie has not been able to complete all the required work in her English, math, and social studies classes. The work she has turned in has been of acceptable quality. Marnie is small for her age. Her favorite subject is reading.	11	100%	--	--	Male
	15	75%	5	25%	Female

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Table II - Cont.

Summary of Male and Female Respondents' Attitudes Toward Grade Repetition

	Promote No.	Promote %	Retain No.	Retain %	
David is a borderline third grader who transferred midyear from a village school. He is quiet and well-behaved. Oral reading is difficult for him, and it appears difficult for him to express himself verbally. He is of average intelligence size.	7	70%	3	30%	Male
	9	47%	10	53%	Female
Tania is a shy first grade student who exhibits little self-confidence and rarely smiles. She is smaller than many of her classmates. She is an adequate, but slow, reader and usually is one of the last to turn in assignments. Her attendance is good, and Tania never causes a disturbance in the classroom or on the playground.	7	70%	3	30%	Male
	10	56%	8	44%	Female
Darron is a kindergarten student who still cannot write his name, and he doesn't know his colors. He's always just a little behind most of the other students in his class. His mother thinks Darron is doing fine because, after all, he's only in kindergarten.	2	20%	8	80%	Male
	--	--	18	100%	Female
Darla is a sixth grade student who spends, it seems, as much time in the reading and math resource room or in the principal's office as she does in her classroom. Her attendance is fair, but she never turns in any of the work she misses when she is absent. Although Darla's IQ is in the high average range, her reading level is only that of a fourth grader. Math is not much higher, and she is failing in spelling. Her work and study habits are very poor, and homework is rarely completed.	3	30%	7	70%	Male
	4	21%	15	79%	Female

Table III

Summary of Primary, Intermediate, and other Elementary Respondents' Attitudes Toward Grade Repetition

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

Item	SA No.	SA %	A No.	A %	D No.	D %	SD No.	SD %	*AVERAGE
1. The primary purpose of retention is to prepare a student for successful achievement in the following grade.	2	33%	4	67%	--	--	--	--	3.33 Primary
	6	43%	6	43%	2	14%	--	--	3.29 Inter.
	1	11%	6	67%	2	22%	--	--	2.89 Other
2. It is acceptable to promote a student who has not successfully completed the requirements for particular grade level.	1	17%	2	33%	1	17%	2	33%	2.33 Primary
	1	7%	7	50%	5	36%	1	7%	2.57 Inter.
	--	--	3	33%	2	22%	4	45%	1.89 Other
3. Promotion should be only a matter of attending classes a certain number of days during the school year.	--	--	--	--	1	17%	5	83%	1.17 Primary
	--	--	--	--	3	21%	11	79%	1.21 Inter.
	--	--	--	--	1	11%	8	89%	1.11 Other
4. Promotion should be based upon mastery of grade-level requirements.	3	50%	3	50%	--	--	--	--	3.50 Primary
	4	29%	8	57%	2	14%	--	--	3.14 Inter.
	2	22%	6	67%	1	11%	--	--	3.11 Other
5. Retention will stifle a child's desire to learn.	--	--	1	17%	2	33%	3	50%	1.67 Primary
	--	--	1	7%	12	86%	1	7%	2.00 Inter.
	1	11%	1	11%	6	67%	1	11%	2.22 Other
6. Retention can be ultimately beneficial to students retained in the intermediate grades.	--	--	5	83%	1	17%	--	--	2.83 Primary
	2	14%	12	86%	--	--	--	--	3.14 Inter.
	--	--	2	29%	5	71%	--	--	2.29 Other
7. Retaining a student in the primary grades is less traumatic than retention in the intermediate grades.	4	67%	--	--	2	33%	--	--	3.33 Primary
	3	21%	7	50%	4	29%	--	--	2.93 Inter.
	3	33%	5	56%	1	11%	--	--	3.22 Other
8. A child's parents should ultimately decide whether to promote or retain the child.	--	--	3	50%	2	33%	1	17%	2.33 Primary
	3	21%	5	36%	6	43%	--	--	2.79 Inter.
	--	--	2	22%	5	56%	2	22%	2.00 Other

*Averages were computed by assigning numeric values to responses: SA=4, A=3, D=2, SD=1.

Table III - Cont.

Summary of Primary, Intermediate, and other Elementary Respondents' Attitudes Toward Grade Repetition

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

Item	SA		A		D		SD		AVERAGE
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
9. A child's lack of achievement may be the result of immaturity because the child's birthdate falls in the last half of the year.	4	67%	2	33%	--	--	--	--	3.67 Primary
	3	22%	9	64%	1	7%	1	7%	3.00 Inter.
	2	22%	6	67%	--	--	1	11%	3.00 Other
10. Retention can be a positive step in a child' education.	4	67%	2	33%	--	--	--	--	3.67 Primary
	5	36%	9	64%	--	--	--	--	3.36 Inter.
	3	33%	5	56%	1	11%	--	--	3.22 Other
11. A child's maturation and emotional growth are as important as academic achievement.	4	67%	2	33%	--	--	--	--	3.67 Primary
	7	50%	7	50%	--	--	--	--	3.50 Inter.
	4	44%	5	56%	--	--	--	--	3.44 Other
12. Retaining students will help them catch up academically.	2	33%	3	50%	1	17%	--	--	3.17 Primary
	1	7%	11	79%	2	14%	--	--	2.93 Inter.
	--	--	8	89%	1	11%	--	--	2.89 Other
13. Retention has a detrimental effect on a student's self-concept.	--	--	1	17%	4	66%	1	17%	2.00 Primary
	--	--	4	29%	10	71%	--	--	2.29 Inter.
	--	--	7	88%	1	12%	--	--	2.88 Other
14. Classroom behavior is an important consideration in determining a child's promotion or retention.	--	--	3	50%	3	50%	--	--	2.50 Primary
	1	8%	4	30%	7	54%	1	8%	2.38 Inter.
	1	11%	1	11%	7	78%	--	--	2.33 Other
15. Retention has a detrimental effect on a child's attitudes.	--	--	--	--	5	83%	1	17%	1.83 Primary
	--	--	5	36%	8	57%	1	7%	2.29 Inter.
	1	12%	5	63%	2	25%	--	--	2.88 Other
16. Retention has a detrimental effect on a child's academic achievement.	--	--	--	--	4	67%	2	33%	1.67 Primary
	--	--	--	--	11	79%	3	21%	1.79 Inter.
	--	--	1	11%	8	89%	--	--	2.11 Other

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Table III - Cont.

Summary of Primary, Intermediate, and other Elementary Respondents' Attitudes Toward Grade Repetition

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

Item	SA No.	SA %	A No.	A %	D No.	D %	SD No.	SD %	AVERAGE
17. Retention provides a child with time to grow and mature, increasing success in learning.	3	50%	2	33%	1	12%	--	--	3.33 Primary
	3	21%	11	79%	--	--	--	--	3.21 Inter.
	3	33%	5	56%	1	11%	--	--	3.22 Other
18. Retention reduces the range of abilities in a classroom placing students closer to their learning peers.	--	--	6	100%	--	--	--	--	3.00 Primary
	--	--	9	64%	4	29%	1	7%	2.57 Inter.
	1	12%	4	44%	4	44%	--	--	2.67 Other
19. Retention provides motivational incentives for students.	1	17%	3	50%	2	33%	--	--	2.83 Primary
	2	14%	4	29%	8	57%	--	--	2.57 Inter.
	--	--	1	12%	7	88%	--	--	2.13 Other

	Promote No.	Promote %	Retain No.	Retain %	
Cheryl's teacher rarely has to remind her to work independently, to pay attention, or to talk in turn. Although her attendance is good, she is reading approximately two years below her fourth grade level and her math skills are only somewhat higher. She is of average intelligence and size.	1	17%	5	83%	Primary
	8	62%	5	38%	Inter.
	2	25%	6	75%	Other
Tim is a mature second grader who is a willing contribution to class discussions and cooperates with others in group situations. Although he has been absent 34 days this year, he has attempted to make up some missed assignments. He has an IQ of 95 and is reading approximately one year below grade level. He enjoys and does quite well in science, but math is difficult for him, and he needs much encouragement to complete assignments. Tim is quite popular with his classmates.	4	67%	2	33%	Primary
	10	77%	3	23%	Inter.
	6	75%	2	25%	Other

Table III - Cont.

Summary of Primary, Intermediate, and other Elementary Respondents' Attitudes Toward Grade Repetition

	Promote No.	Promote %	Retain No.	Retain %	
Marnie is a visually impaired fifth grader whose attendance is excellent, but she has to spend part of every school day in the resource room working on such skills as learning to type and improving her listening skills. As a result, Marnie has not been able to complete all the required work in her English, math, and social studies classes. The work she has turned in has been of acceptable quality. Marnie is small for her age. Her favorite subject is reading.	5	83%	1	17%	Primary
	11	79%	3	21%	Inter.
	6	67%	3	33%	Other
David is a borderline third grader who transferred midyear from a village school. He is quiet and well-behaved. Oral reading is difficult for him, and it appears difficult for him to express himself verbally. He is of average intelligence size.	2	40%	3	60%	Primary
	7	54%	6	46%	Inter.
	6	67%	3	33%	Other
Tania is a shy first grade student who exhibits little self-confidence and rarely smiles. She is smaller than many of her classmates. She is an adequate, but slow, reader and usually is one of the last to turn in assignments. Her attendance is good, and Tania never causes a disturbance in the classroom or on the playground.	2	33%	4	67%	Primary
	9	82%	2	18%	Inter.
	5	56%	4	44%	Other
Darron is a kindergarten student who still cannot write his name, and he doesn't know his colors. He's always just a little behind most of the other students in his class. His mother thinks Darron is doing fine because, after all, he's only in kindergarten.	1	20%	4	80%	Primary
	1	8%	11	92%	Inter.
	--	--	9	100%	Other
Darla is a sixth grade student who spends, it seems, as much time in the reading and math resource room or in the principal's office as she does in her classroom. Her attendance is fair, but she never turns in any of the work she misses when she is absent. Although Darla's IQ is in the high average range, her reading level is only that of a fourth grader. Math is not much higher, and she is failing in spelling. Her work and study habits are very poor, and homework is rarely completed.	3	50%	3	50%	Primary
	1	7%	13	93%	Inter.
	2	29%	5	71%	Other

also most strongly agreed (65%) and agreed (35%) with this statement. Primary respondents, too, most strongly agreed (67%) and agreed (33%) with the statement.

The total group's second most agreed with statement was item 10: "Retention can be a positive step in a child's education." Only three per cent, one respondent, disagreed with the statement, while the remaining 97% strongly agreed, 39%, or agreed, 58%. This was the second strongest statement for all groups, except males, and it was the third strongest statement for that subgroup.

The total group and all subgroups strongly disagreed with item 3: "Promotion should be only a matter of attending classes a certain number of days during the school year." The total group and all subgroups except other respondents voiced their second greatest disagreement with item 16: Retention has a detrimental effect on a child's academic growth."

All subgroups and the total group unanimously disagreed with item 5: "Retention will stifle a child's desire to learn." Only one respondent strongly agreed (3%) with the statement, and three (10%) agreed.

Male and female respondents indicated a difference of opinion on item 2: "It is acceptable to promote a student who has not successfully completed the requirements for a particular grade level." Males agreed (2.55) with the statement, and females disagreed (2.10). A difference of opinion was also noted for item 13: "Retention has a detrimental effect on a student's self-concept," although the difference was not as great. Males (2.60) felt that "retention

provides motivational incentive for students," item 19; but female respondents disagreed (2.40).

Results shown in Table III indicate that while primary (2.33) and other respondents (1.89) disagreed with item 2, "It is acceptable to promote a student who has not successfully completed the requirements for a particular grade level," intermediate respondents agreed (2.57). While all Table III subgroups agreed that "promotion should be based upon mastery of grade-level requirements," primary respondents strongly agreed (3.50).

Another difference of opinion was noted on item 6. Primary (2.83) and intermediate (3.14) respondents agreed that "retention can be ultimately beneficial to students retained in the intermediate grades," but other respondents disagreed (2.29). Intermediate respondents (2.79) felt that "a child's parents should ultimately decide whether to promote or retain the child," but primary (2.33) and other (2.00) respondents disagreed.

Other respondents (2.88) agreed that "retention has a detrimental effect on a student's self-concept." Primary (2.00) and intermediate (2.29) respondents disagreed. The same difference of opinion emerged on item 15 concerning a child's attitudes. Other respondents (2.88) agreed that retention has a detrimental effect, but primary (1.83) and intermediate (2.29) respondents disagreed.

Primary (2.83) and intermediate (2.57) respondents agreed that "retention provides motivational incentive for students." Other respondents (2.13), however, disagreed.

On the third portion of the questionnaire, respondents had the options of promoting or retaining students on the basis of brief student profiles. The

total group retained three of the seven students: Cheryl, 55%; Darla, 76%; and Darron, 93%. All other students were promoted.

Female respondents, however, retained four students. David (53%) was retained in addition to the three retained by the total group.

The other three subgroups displayed a wide range of opinion. Intermeiate respondents retained only Darron (92%) and Darla (93%). Other respondents were in agreement with the total group with only percentages varying: Darla, 71%; Cheryl, 75%; and Darron, 100%. The primary respondents retained four students with Darla (50%) being an even split in opinion. David (60%), Tania (67%), Darron (80%), and Cheryl (83%) were retained.

The following comments were recorded on the comments section of the questionnaire and are representative of the comments in general.

1) It only harms a student to promote . . . when not ready academically or behaviorally.

2) I don't know how much help retention is in the intermediate grades, but one can't promote if the child is not academically prepared!

3) The parents should be a part of the decision.

4) If the parents do not recommend retention, forget it.

5) I try never to retain a poor student. If they are doing inadequate work, they might as well do it at the next level. However, if they are trying hard and are "immature" retention may help.

6) Retention should be when child is immature, well behind in several areas, parents agree to retention, child has <u>not</u> made an honest effort to learn, child has a positive attitude toward retention.

7) Retentions are not to be taken lightly and should be carried through with only after much dialogue with parents and student. As many factors as possible, i.e. maturity (physical, emotional), attitude, home situation, class performance, academic achievement, effort levels, etc. should be considered thoroughly before retention is recommended.

8) Who says every child is meant to succeed in school? Have we lowered our educational standards to meet the underachievers so that these special cases can succeed at the expense of the majority?

9) I feel it is a teacher's responsibility and right to make the decision of retention and promotion.

10) In public education we deal with the masses at taxpayers' expense. If a child can't succeed with the "extras" (special education, gifted, bilingual, etc.,) then the child needs to be retained until he or she can fulfill the requirements or succeeds.

11) Retention can be a very positive action if handled correctly.

Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this paper was to determine the attitudes of gradduate students taking education classes on the University of Alaska, Anchorage campus during the summer of 1984 toward grade repetition. Tabulations for the 31 returned questionnaires indicated that the total group of respondents agreed that retention, or grade repetition, can be a positive step and ultimately beneficial to students, that maturation and emotional growth are as important as academic achievement, and that retention can help students catch up academically. Respondents also agreed that retention does not have a detrimental effect on a child's self-concept, attitudes, or academic growth.

Respondents indicated strong disagreement with the concept that promotion should be contingent only upon attending school a specificied number of days per year. Classroom behavior should be of major importance when considering retention, according to the respondents, and parents should not make the final decision regarding a child's promotion or retention.

Respondents believed that retention allows a child time to mature, grow, and succeed in learning, that students who did not complete grade level requirements should be retained, and that the main objective "of retention is to prepare a student for successful achievement in the following grade." Respondents did not believe that retention stifled a child's desire to learn or that retention was a motivational incentive for students. Finally, respondents indicated the belief that retention in the primary grades is less traumatic than in the intermediate grades.

In this study, tabulations indicated that females recommended retention in twice as many of the contrived situations as did males. Intermediate respondents indicated the greatest reluctance to retain students, while primary respondents displayed the least reluctance.

The respondents comments indicated that, in general, retention was an educational responsibility to be exercised with care in situations where students exhibited insufficient academic achievement for promotion. The attitude was expressed that parents should be involved in the decision making process.

Respondents expressed, in general, a favorable attitude toward retention, or grade repetition. The comment of one respondent seemed to express the attitudes of the graduate students who participated in this study. "Retention can be a very positive action if handled correctly."

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APPENDIX

P. O. Box 13005
Trapper Creek, AK 99683
June 18, 1984

Dear Colleague,

During this past school year I have become increasingly interested in the grade retention/promotion controversy. The attached questionnaire was designed to gather information regarding your attitudes about grade retention and promotion. The information is being compiled to partially fulfill requirements of my graduate studies at the University of Alaska, Anchorage.

I sincerely appreciate the approximately ten minutes of your time necessary to complete this questionnaire. Your input is valued. Be assured that this information is completely confidential. Please do not sign the questionnaire.

After completing the questionnaire, please remove this cover letter and return the questionnaire to your instructor. If you wish to learn about the compiled results, please write to me at the above address or call me at 733-2453.

Thank you,

Kay Faerber

Please circle the answer that best describes you for each item.

1. Number of years of teaching experience:

   1-5 6-10 11-15 over 15

2. Level of responsibility:

   Teacher - Kindergarten Through Grade Three

   Teacher - Grade Four Through Grade Six

   Teacher - Other, Such as Special Education, Music, etc.

   Administrator

3. Sex: Female Male

Complete this section of the questionnaire by circling the response that most nearly reflects how you feel.

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

1. The primary purpose of retention is to prepare a student for successful achievement in the following grade.	SA	A	D	SD
2. It is acceptable to promote a student who has not successfully completed the requirements for a particular grade level.	SA	A	D	SD
3. Promotion should be only a matter of attending classes a certain number of days during the school year.	SA	A	D	SD
4. Promotion should be based upon mastery of grade-level requirements.	SA	A	D	SD
5. Retention will stifle a child's desire to learn.	SA	A	D	SD
6. Retention can be ultimately beneficial to students retained in the intermediate grades.	SA	A	D	SD
7. Retaining a student in the primary grades is less traumatic than retention in the intermediate grades.	SA	A	D	SD

Complete this section of the questionnaire by circling the response that most nearly reflects how you feel.

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree

8. A child's parents should ultimately decide whether to promote or retain the child.	SA	A	D	SD
9. A child's lack of achievement may be the result of immaturity because the child's birthdate falls in the last half of the year.	SA	A	D	SD
10. Retention can be a positive step in a child's education.	SA	A	D	SD
11. A child's maturation and emotional growth are as imporant as academic achievement.	SA	A	D	SD
12. Retaining students will help them catch up academically.	SA	A	D	SD
13. Retention has a detrimental effect on a student's self-concept.	SA	A	D	SD
14. Classroom behavior is an important consideration in determining a child's promotion or retention.	SA	A	D	SD
15. Retention has a detrimental effect on a child's attitudes.	SA	A	D	SD
16. Retention has a detrimental effect on a child's academic achievement.	SA	A	D	SD
17. Retention provides a child with time to grow and mature, increasing success in learning.	SA	A	D	SD
18. Retention reduces the range of abilities in a classroom placing students closer to their learning peers.	SA	A	D	SD
19. Retention provides motivational incentive for students.	SA	A	D	SD

For each situation below, circle the response that indicates your decision as the teacher of each child below. In every case, you have kept the parents informed of their child's progress. It is not May, and a decision must be made.

Cheryl's teacher rarely has to remind her to work independently, to pay attention, or to talk in turn. Although her attendance is good, she is reading approximately two years below her fourth grade level and her math skills are only somewhat higher. She is of average intelligence and size.

PROMOTE RETAIN

Tim is a mature second grader who is a willing contribution to class discussions and cooperates with others in group situations. Although he has been absent 34 days this year, he has attempted to make up some missed assignments. He has an IQ of 95 and is reading approximately one year below grade level. He enjoys and does quite well in science, but math is difficult for him, and he needs much encouragement to complete assignments. Tim is quite popular with his classmates.

PROMOTE RETAIN

Marnie is a visually impaired fifth grader whose attendance is excellent, but she has to spend part of every school day in the resource room working on such skills as learning to type and improving her listening skills. As a result, Marnie has not been able to complete all the required work in her English, math, and social studies classes. The work she has turned in has been of acceptable quality. Marnie is small for her age. Her favorite subject is reading.

PROMOTE RETAIN

David is a borderline third grader who transferred midyear from a village school. He is quiet and well-behaved. Oral reading is difficult for him, and it appears difficult for him to express himself verbally. He is of average intelligence and size.

PROMOTE RETAIN

Tania is a shy first grade student who exhibits little self-confidence and rarely smiles. She is smaller than many of her classmates. She is an adequate, but slow, reader and usually is one of the last to turn in assignments. Her attendance is good, and Tania never causes a disturbance in the classroom or on the playground.

PROMOTE RETAIN

Darron is a kindergarten student who still cannot write his name, and he doesn't know his colors. He's always just a little behind most of the other students in his class. His mother thinks Darron is doing fine because, after all, he's only in kindergarten.

PROMOTE RETAIN

Darla is a sixth grade student who spends, it seems, as much time in the reading and math resource room or in the principal's office as she does in her classroom. Her attendance is fair, but she never turns in any of the work she misses when she is absent. Although Darla's IQ is in the high average range, her reading level is only that of a fourth grader. Math is not much higher, and she is failing in spelling. Her work and study habits are very poor, and homework is rarely completed.

PROMOTE RETAIN

Comments: